



Report to:

Joint Development Control
Committee

14 April 2021

Lead Officer:

Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Milton Parish

127-136 Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge

Proposal: Erection of a building for Office/Research and Development use following demolition of existing buildings, and associated infrastructure and works

Applicant: GCR Camprop Nine Ltd

Key material considerations:

- Principle of Development
- Character/Visual Amenity
- Historic Environment
- Landscaping/Trees
- Biodiversity
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Transport and Highways
- Sustainable Construction/Carbon Reduction
- Land Contamination
- Air Quality
- Other Matters
- Planning Obligations
- The Planning Balance

Is it a Departure Application?: No

Decision due by: 1 March 2021 (PPA)

Application brought to Committee because: Major development in NECAAP area

Presenting officer: Fiona Bradley

Executive Summary

1. The site is located within an area of land identified as part of the emerging North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP). The NECAAP does not yet have sufficient weight to be considered a material consideration in the determination of this application. The NPPF and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 therefore, form the basis of the determination of this application.
2. The proposal is for additional employment floorspace in an area identified for employment growth in South Cambridgeshire. The principle of development is therefore supported.
3. The proposed development will provide a BREEAM Excellent certified building with a low embodied carbon design whilst also achieving significant carbon reductions once operational.
4. The design and appearance of the building is considered appropriate in its context and respects its urban setting within a business park. Furthermore, the scale and height of the building will not cause visual harm to the wider landscape.
5. The proposed development will not increase on site car parking and therefore, promotes sustainable forms of travel to and from the site. This includes mitigation through internal infrastructure improvements within the Science Park and a financial contribution towards strategic transport infrastructure in north east Cambridge.

Relevant planning history

None

Planning policies, Guidance and Other material considerations

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for the LPA is the Cambridge Local Plan 2018.

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)

The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the CIL Regulations) generally set out regulations relating to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Part 11 refers specifically to planning obligations (including those in Section 106 Agreements) and is relevant to the consideration of these Applications and will influence the final content of Section 106 Agreement, in the event that planning permission is granted.

CIL Regulation 122 imposes limitations on the use of planning obligations. It states (where there is no CIL charging regime), a planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is:

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b) directly related to the development, and
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Equalities Act 2010

The Applications have been assessed against the relevant sections of the Equalities Act 2010. It is not considered that the Applications discriminate against people with protected characteristics (age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) specified in this Act.

Use Classes Order Change

From 1st September 2020 the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (2020 No. 757) came into force.

Three new use classes have been created by this change: Class E (Commercial, business and service), Class F.1 (Learning and non-residential institutions) and F.2 (Local community).

Class E creates a new commercial, business and service use class which subsumes retail (A1), financial and professional services (A2), restaurants and cafes (A3) and business (B1a/b/c) use classes. Uses such as gyms, nurseries/creches and health centres (previously in use classes D1 Non-residential institutions and D2 Assembly and leisure) and other uses which are suitable for a town centre area are also included in Class E. Since 1st September 2020 planning permission is not required for changes between these, what were until recently, different kinds of uses. This is because they are now grouped into the same use class and therefore will not constitute development.

For example, a retail shop can change to a restaurant, or an office building could change to a retail supermarket without needing planning permission for a change of use (providing there are no restrictive covenants, conditions, section 106 obligations restricting the existing use).

Uses which can have potential amenity impacts on neighbouring properties will become sui generis and any material change of use will require planning permission. This includes pubs/bars, takeaways, cinemas, concert, dance, and bingo halls.

For any planning applications submitted before 1 September 2020, the Use Classes in effect when the application was submitted will be used to determine the application.

National Guidance

6. National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guide 2019

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (SCLP) 2018

7. S/2 Objectives of the Local Plan
S/3 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
S/5 Provision of Jobs and Homes
S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031
CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change
CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments
CC/4 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC/6 Construction Methods
CC/7 Water Quality
CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems
CC/9 Managing Flood Risk
HQ/1 Design Principles
HQ/2 Public Art and New Development
NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character
NH/4 Biodiversity
NH/14 Heritage Assets
E/1 New Employment Provision near Cambridge – Cambridge Science Park
SC/9 Lighting proposals
SC/10 Noise Pollution
SC/11 Contaminated Land
SC/12 Air Quality
SS/4 Cambridge Northern Fringe East and land surrounding the proposed
Cambridge Science Park Station
TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel
TI/3 Parking Provision
TI/8 Infrastructure and New Development

Cambridge and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2011

8. CS31 Waste Water Treatment Works Safeguarding Areas

Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP)

Greater Cambridge Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

9. Sustainable Design and Construction – Adopted January 2020
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water – Adopted November 2016
District Design Guide – Adopted March 2010
Landscape in New Developments – Adopted March 2010
Biodiversity – Adopted July 2009
Trees and Development Sites – Adopted January 2009

Consultation

10. **Milton Parish Council** – Neutral, no recommendation

11. **Urban Design Officer** – no objection subject to conditions

Further Comments

Whilst officers are generally supportive of the proposals from an urban design perspective, and welcome the additional information provided mainly to address height and visual impact concerns, it is disappointing that some of the issues raised in the last urban design consultation (comments dated 30.09.2020) have not been satisfactorily addressed. See comments below.

Height and Visual Impact

In terms of height and impact on the public realm, Officers are satisfied with the information provided by the applicant: a CGI including wireframe information on the approved Plot 1 & 21 and the Village hotel scheme have been provided, demonstrating that the proposal would be in keeping with the future scale and development of the Cambridge Science Park. The height of the design is comparative of the Village Hotel and creates gentle visual stepping stone from the massing of the unit in the foreground up to the greater height of the tower at the back.

Outdoor space

Whilst an area of outdoor seating is now provided by the front entrance (integrated with planter), it is not clear how this can be approved as a drawing, as currently only an image of this outdoor seating concept is included in the 'Supplementary Planning Information – Landscape' document.

Parking layout

It is disappointing that the issue of car park to the south of the site has not been addressed. In the last consultation, the applicant was asked to reduce the prominence of parking (south of the site) by introducing a landscaped seating area to break up the long row of car park, this would also provide the opportunity for staff and visitors and appreciate the public drain.

Public Art

Currently there is very limited information on public art, this is not helped by the lack of meaningful outdoor furniture for staff and visitors.

Initial Comments

Officers support the proposals from an urban design perspective. The proposals are considered to broadly align with the relevant design policies set out in the

'National Planning Policy Framework' (2019) (NPPF), the 'Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan July 2020' (Draft NECAAP) and Policies HQ/1 and SS/4 of the 'South Cambridgeshire Local Plan' (2018) (The Local Plan) in relation to design.

Certain aspects of the design can be further improved to ensure a high-quality scheme for Cambridge Science Park. The height of the proposed building would require further justification.

Scale and Height

Whilst the proposals would result in an increase in floor space, as it is still contained within the existing footprint, it would not have an unacceptable impact on land intake. The intensification of commercial floor space also aligns with Policy SS/4 of the Local Plan

In terms of the storey heights, the Draft NECAAP assumes 4m for non-residential development at ground floor, and states that new/replacement buildings in the Cambridge Science Park should be 4-5 storeys in height (maximum 6 storeys 18m), therefore, the proposed height of 6 storeys plus roof plant may be acceptable given its prominent location subject to further justification: it would be useful to have information on the height of the roof plant and visuals to demonstrate that the views of the roof plant would not dominate the skyline and detract from the high quality architecture that this scheme aims to deliver.

The proposed building has the potential to complement the height of the recently approved buildings on the Trinity Hub site, which are 4 to 6 storeys in height.

Layout

Comments provided with regard to alteration of internal layout of toilets and kitchens.

The rationale of providing outdoor terraces on the top floor of the proposed building is supported. However, in line with the other recently office/R& D buildings in the vicinity, the proposals would benefit from having outdoor seating areas at ground level, perhaps located to the arrival area of the site. It would be useful to have an dedicated outdoor seating area to the south of the site

Architecture

The contemporary approach to architecture is supported. The main entrance to the building (north façade) lacks prominence and would benefit from some modification. It is recommended that the projecting element above this entrance is extended to the ground floor to help create a more pronounced entrance.

Public Art

The recently approved scheme at Plots 1-21 includes a public art strategy – cladding in the form of LED screens to address the Milton Road and the Guided

Busway frontages. Given the prominent location of the site, there is scope for public art to be included in the scheme in some way, e.g. the cladding/outdoor furniture can include images/patterns of drawings by local children following a recent youth engagement exercise with the local school. This can be set out in the S106.

12. **Landscape Officer** – no objection subject to conditions

Updated Comments

Cycle parking – Previous comments apply

Parking – welcome the provision of parking spaces for motorcycles and scooters. Concerns have been addressed.

Existing vegetation – previous comments apply and to be conditioned

Soft landscaping – Welcome the provision of more soft landscaping. Details, specification and maintenance are to be conditioned.

Hard landscaping – although the applicant has retained the ‘hit and miss’ surface treatment to the car park there are some reservations. This material is generally used in rural locations with little usage and not consistent with the local characteristics of the Science Park. Recommend that the applicant replaces this material with a permeable block paving material.

Layout – Welcome the revisions undertaken by the applicant inclusive of enlarged paving area for pedestrians and cyclist to the west of the site and the removal of the layby to the east creating a new planting bed. However, I am concerned that the landscape layout at the entrance of the site with curved lines does not reflect the level of drama, pronounced clean straight and angular lines of the new build. Suggest applicant revisits the entrance layout which accentuates the main entrance and cantilevered projection.

Height – Welcome the provision of a Visual Appraisal and agree with their findings that the greatest visual effects are found within the immediate setting of the site, inside CSP resulting in Slight and Neutral effects. Beyond, where views are available to the proposed development, effects reduce to Minimal and Neutral.

Landscape character – Agree with the applicant that there would be minimal effects on the landscape character given that the proposed development is an office building within Cambridge Science Park and an existing employment area

Artificial lighting – previous comments apply and to be conditioned

Initial Comments

Cycle parking – Welcome cycle parking within the building which is both secure and covered. As per NECAAP applicant to confirm the following:

- At least 5-10% of cycle parking provision should be designed to accommodate non-standard cycles and should consider appropriate provision for electric charging points.
- Details of 2 tier racks to be confirmed

Parking - Appropriate space for motorbikes, scooters and car pool hire scheme vehicles to be included. Applicant to confirm

Existing vegetation – Subject to achieving Planning Permission, a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan will be required. This will include the following: fencing type, ground protection measures, “no dig” surfacing, access facilitation pruning specification, phasing and an extensive auditable monitoring schedule.

Soft landscaping – Concerned that the development proposals do not demonstrate how landscaping and planting have been considered as an integral part of the development proposal. Landscaping proposals should

- relate to the wider setting of the area with sufficient space for trees and planting to mature and to support biodiversity;
- achieve a suitable visual setting for building(s) having regard to both internal and external views of the area.

Applicant to submit a landscape strategy to confirm how the development addresses the above requirements

Planting details to be confirmed upon the 5th floor roof terrace, roof plan and ancillary building with non-rainfall irrigation methods. Rain garden details to be confirmed Tree, shrub & turf planting specification and schedule to be confirmed with underground root cells to feature trees

Hard landscaping – Applicant has included P7 Hit and miss concrete paving sown with hardwearing and shade tolerant grass seed as parking bays to the south of the site. Other than weekends this grass area will be used for car parking and unlikely to survive due to heavy shading. Suggest applicant replaces material with a permeable paving solution and omits some parking bays to enable sufficient tree and shrub planting. Furniture specification to be confirmed

Layout – The external road layout and pedestrian footways should reflect or respect the design criteria for Secondary streets as outlined within the Draft NEC AAP. These street should be with low traffic volumes, be more inclusive for all users within a shared space with less need for physical segregation, although there should be clear delineation for different users (for example through use of different surfacing materials and low kerb heights) to minimise conflict, particularly for vulnerable users such as those with visual impairments.

Applicant to revisit layout to address this design criteria with particular attention to the front of the site and adjacent to the ancillary area. How this has been addressed to be provided within the landscape statement.

Height – The proposed build appears to be approx. 26m inclusive of roof plant which conflicts with the Draft NEC AAP. Applicant to confirm and provide evidence to demonstrate why the new development deviates from the recommendations of '4-5 storeys typical height, maximum height 6 storeys (18m)'.

Little information has been supplied to demonstrate how the height and mass will impact the townscape, landscape and available views. Applicant to confirm that the new building has a positive impact upon its setting in terms of location on the site, height, scale and form, materials, detailing, wide townscape and landscape impacts and available views. A landscape and visual impact assessment, heritage impact assessment and massing study is required to carefully assess and consider its impact on the historic and wider skyline and its relationships with the surrounding context, the setting of Cambridge and Fen Edge approaches, including their relationship to the Fen Ditton

Previously agreed wider viewpoints can be accessed via Landscape Character and Visual Impact Appraisal: Development Scenarios and Figures

Artificial lighting – Little information has been supplied by the applicant to demonstrate how artificial lighting will increase levels of lighting and its impact upon the townscape, landscape and available views. Applicant to confirm within landscape and visual impact assessment, heritage impact assessment

13. Sustainability Officer – no objection subject to conditions

Updated Comments

Overheating – The document explains that the overheating modelling has been carried out using a future weather profile, recommended in GLA guidance DSY1 (Design Summer Year for the 2020's, high emissions, 50% percentile scenario).

Rainwater & Greywater Harvesting – The applicant has clearly set out the reasons why both rainwater and greywater harvesting are not feasible for the development including:

- Unpredictable levels of rainfall
- High plant space requirements
- Regular maintenance issues
- Storage limits
- System requirements (greywater)

The applicant's response has addressed the queries raised and is acceptable from a sustainable construction point of view subject to conditions set out in the original comments.

Initial Comments

The applicant has provided a full and comprehensive energy and sustainability strategy for the proposed development and the applicant's approach to reducing full lifecycle carbon emissions is welcomed.

Overall, the proposals from a sustainable construction perspective is supported. The proposals are considered to broadly align with the relevant policies set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (2019) (NPPF), the 'Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan July 2020' (Draft NECAAP) and Policies CC/3 and CC/4 of the 'South Cambridgeshire Local Plan' (2018).

51.86% carbon reduction through passive design and renewable technology compared to baseline Part L Building Regs.

Further information requested in relation to overheating risk and rainwater/greywater harvesting. Suggest the following conditions be applied to any permission granted:

- Renewable Energy Strategy to be implemented as set out in the Sustainability and Energy Strategy
- BREEAM Design Stage Certificate to be submitted demonstrating BREEAM Excellent as a minimum shall be met
- BREEAM Post Construction Certificate to be submitted

14. Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Development Management)

No objection subject to condition regarding submission of a traffic management plan

15. Cambridgeshire County Council (Highways Transport Assessment Team)

Final Comments

No objection subject to mitigation as follows;

- Travel Plan (condition)
- Widening of footway on Science Park perimeter road between Science Park roundabout and access road to enable shared walking/cycling (condition)
- Financial contribution of £165,000 for strategic sustainable transport infrastructure to enable modal shift to non-car related transport
- Financial contribution of £5,000 towards on street parking restrictions

Further Comments

Holding objection subject to further information being provided

Initial Comments

Holding objection subject to further information being provided.

16. **Conservation Officer** – no objections

17. **Ecology Officer** – no objection subject to conditions

Proposed conditions regarding removal of vegetation with respect to the protection of breeding birds and provision of a biodiversity enhancement scheme.

18. **Tree Officer** – no objection subject to conditions

Proposed conditions for AMS and TPP, landscaping plan and replacement of landscaping within 5 years

19. **LLFA**

Further comments – no objection subject to conditions

Proposed conditions regarding submission of a surface water drainage scheme (including groundwater modelling) and informatives regarding ordinary watercourse consent, Green roofs and pollution control

Initial comments – Holding objection: further details regarding groundwater displacement and waterproofing of basement

20. **Drainage officer** – no objections subject to conditions

Proposed conditions regarding submission of a surface water drainage scheme and management and maintenance of the surface water drainage system

21. **Scientific Support Officer (Contaminated Land)** – no objections

22. **Environmental Health** – no objection subject to conditions and informatives

Proposed conditions regarding construction hours and burning of waste

23. **Environment Agency** – no objection

24. **Design Out Crime Officer** – supportive

25. **Anglian Water** – Foul drainage from the development is within catchment of Cambridge Water Recycling Centre which does not have capacity to treat the flows from the development. Anglian Water are obligated to accept the flows with the benefit of planning consent and therefore will take the necessary steps to ensure there is sufficient capacity. Recommend informatives.

26. **Airport Safeguarding** – no objection

Representations from members of the public

27. None

The site and its surroundings

28. The application site is located on the eastern side of the Cambridge Science Park. The site currently benefits from 2 access points off the private road. The private road links to the Cambridge Science Park Road (perimeter road circulating within the science park). The main entrance to the science park from Milton Road is also a short distance east of the site. The site is currently occupied by a flat roof single storey office building, containing approximately 1000m² of floorspace which is currently unoccupied. It is centrally positioned on the site with car parking either side. There is amenity landscaping to along the frontage which includes a mature tree.
29. To the south of the site is the first public drain, a surface water drainage ditch which runs through the science park. The drainage ditch is flanked by vegetation on either side. Beyond the drain is the Trinity Centre and land which is currently being used as a temporary builder's compound for the storage of building materials in association with the development of plots 1-21 opposite. To the north and east of the site are modest two storey office buildings, whilst to the west is a low scale single storey office building of a similar appearance to that occupying the application site.
30. Contemporary office buildings of a more significant scale have recently been completed and are located on land to the east and south-east of the site. These are positioned between Cambridge Science Park Road and Milton Road.
31. The site is located within walking distance of bus stops on Milton Road and the Cambridge Guided busway. The site is also well served by walking and cycling infrastructure to Cambridge North Station which is around 10 minutes walk from the application site.

The proposal

32. The proposal is to demolish the existing building and erect a part 5, part 6 storey office building which contains approximately 6,300m² of floorspace. The building also contains a small basement.
33. The building will be centrally positioned on the site, with its main entrance on the north elevation, set within a scheme of hard and soft landscaping. A secondary entrance is located within the southern elevation, adjacent to the car park. A low level outbuilding containing cycle parking, refuse storage and an electricity substation will be positioned along the western boundary.
34. The building is designed with sustainability in mind. The main structure is proposed to be constructed of cross laminated timber, a low embodied carbon solution and is designed to achieve BREEAM Excellent certification. The internal layout of the building includes a central atrium containing the main circulation space. Lettable office floorspace is positioned either side of the atrium. The upper floor consists of 2 roof terraces, one to the south and the other to the north. The appearance of the building is defined by 3 main elements. The front elevation (north) includes a series of projecting pods and projecting staircase, whilst the

remaining elevations are clad with a secondary skin of perforated metal solar shading. The third element consists of a projecting upper floor within the east elevation to give the impression of a floating office.

35. In terms of access, it is proposed to retain the two existing access points however, these will be altered into a one-way system around the building. Cycle parking is located within the outbuilding along the western perimeter of the site, as well as within the south-west corner of the building at ground floor level. Car parking is positioned to the rear of the building, with the number of parking spaces maintained at existing levels.

Planning Assessment

Background

36. Policy SS/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan sets out the proposed development approach for Cambridge Northern Fringe East and Cambridge North railway station. The policy advises that the amount of development, site capacity, time scales and phasing of development will be established through the preparation of an Area Action Plan (AAP) and that the final boundaries of land that the joint AAP will consider will be determined by the AAP. The policy sets out a number of criteria for development proposals including that they do not compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area. Paragraph 3.31 of the supporting text states; *“planning applications submitted before the adoption of the AAP will be considered on their own merits and subject to ensuring that they would not prejudice the outcome of the AAP process and the achievement of the comprehensive vision for the area as a whole that will be established by the AAP.”*
37. The application site is located within the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan (NECAAP) area. A draft NECAAP (Regulation 18) was consulted on between 27 July 2020 and October 2020. The NECAAP covers an area of 182ha and includes all of Cambridge Science Park. The draft plan has currently set out a proposal for around 72,000m² of additional business floorspace on the Science Park, with a typical building height of 4-5 storeys and a maximum of 6 storeys (18m).
38. Land to the east of Milton Road also lies within the AAP area and includes the Milton Waste Water Treatment Plant (WTP). Redevelopment of this land requires the relocation of the WTP which has received significant Government Housing Infrastructure Funding. Relocation of the WTP will enable comprehensive planning of the North East Cambridge Area and Anglian Water have commenced a Development Consent Order (DCO) process to enable the relocation.
39. Work on the NECAAP is progressing to complete the Regulation 18 stage, consider the responses received and prepare the Proposed Submission AAP. This is likely to be completed by the end of 2021. It is then proposed the Councils would make a decision ahead of the DCO Examination to agree the AAP for Regulation 19 publication, but actually carrying out the consultation would be

subject to the successful completion of the DCO process, because of the need at Examination to be able to demonstrate that the development proposed on the site could be delivered. It is anticipated that the AAP process would pause until the outcome of the DCO is known which is likely to be Autumn 2023. This would mean the AAP is not submitted for examination until Spring 2024.

40. Paragraphs 48-50 of the NPPF sets out the following with regard to the status of emerging plans with respect to decision making.

Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation (the more advanced, the greater the weight), the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF.

In the context of the presumption of sustainable development, arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in limited circumstances where both; the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant planning permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to the emerging plan and; the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination; or – in the case of a neighbourhood plan – before the end of the local planning authority publicity period on the draft plan. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.

41. The emerging AAP is at an early stage of its preparation and its progress will be delayed until the outcome of the DCO process with respect to the WTP is known. Furthermore, the proposed development is not of a such significant scale which, if granted, would undermine the plan making process. Given these circumstances it is not considered the draft AAP carries any weight in the determination of this application.

Principle

42. One of the cornerstones of achieving sustainable development through the planning system is helping to building a strong, competitive economy. The NPPF (paragraph 80) recognises that “*planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity and allow each area to build on its strengths*”. Policy S/2 of the Local Plan sets out the vision for the growth within South Cambridgeshire which includes supporting its position as a world leader in research and technology based industries. The site

is located within the Science Park “special policy area” which refers to policy E/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Policy E/1 supports appropriate proposals for employment development within the Cambridge Science Park, particularly where they enable the continued development of the Cambridge Cluster of high technology research and development companies. Policy S/5 identifies an objectively assessed need for an additional 22,000 jobs over the plan period to 2031 to support the Cambridge Cluster. This equates to around 143,000m² of additional floorspace in the “B” use classes.

43. An Employment Land and Economic Development Study 2020 (ELEDs) led by GL Hearn commissioned by the Councils, has recently been published to support the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. For the plan period to 2041, taking account of the committed land supply, it identifies an expected shortfall in B1a/b provision of 50,000-100,000m² and that this type of accommodation is lacking in the City and around North East Cambridge.
44. The application seeks to develop around 6,300m² of new B1(a) employment floorspace for office/research and development, which would result in a net increase of floorspace on the site of around 5,300m². Occupancy levels are estimated at 430 people. The proposal is located on the edge of Cambridge which is in accordance with the spatial development strategy set out in policy S/6. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the NPPF and policies S/2, S/5, S/6 and E/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Character and Appearance

45. The NPPF identifies, as part of the “social” objective of sustainable development, to foster a well designed and safe built environment. It also states that development which make efficient use of land should be supported taking into account the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places (para 122). Paragraph 127 of the NPPF requires developments to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities). It goes on to advise that development proposals should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping. This is supported by policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan which require new development to respond positively to its context in order to create distinctive, high quality, inclusive and safe places. New development should also be constructed in a sustainable manner using high quality materials with integrated landscaping and enhanced biodiversity.
46. The scale and massing of the building is significantly increased from the existing built form. The building is proposed to be 6 storeys (22m) in height however, the footprint of the building is the same, albeit with a different orientation. The scale and massing of buildings in the immediate context are single storey and two storey buildings set amongst landscaped grounds and surface level car parking. However, the wider context of the Science Park has seen the recent introduction of larger scale buildings occupying a greater footprint and the introduction of multi-level car parking. The adjacent site to the south (Trinity Centre) has planning permission for a 6 storey hotel (23m in height) and outline permission

for a 7 storey office building up to 30m in height. The aspirations for the Science Park are to increase densities and therefore, the scale of buildings proposed aligns with those aspirations.

47. As part of further information to support the application, a Landscape Visual Appraisal was submitted to consider the visual impact of the building from location viewpoints agreed with the Council's Landscape Team. The LVA demonstrates that the greatest visual effects are within the immediate setting of the site. The visual effects are considered acceptable in the context of its urban setting. From wider location viewpoints there would be a minimal or neutral effect and as such would not harm the wider landscape. The Council's landscape team is in agreement with the conclusions of the LVA.
48. In terms of the appearance of the building, the contemporary approach is supported. The proposed north elevation includes projecting bays containing meeting rooms which creates an interesting façade in the streetscene. The solar shading (perforated mesh panels) defines the appearance of the other 3 elevations of the building and highlight the sustainable approach with respect to solar gain. It is proposed that the specific details of the materials can be secured by condition.
49. The Council's urban design officer is supportive of the proposal although raised some minor issues with respect to elements of the internal and external layout, appearance of the building and provision of public art. Those matters relating the internal layout are not relevant to the determination of the application. Other matters were considered by the applicant but have not been amended and officers are of the view that the site layout and building's appearance as proposed is acceptable. Policy HQ/2 of the Local Plan encourages the provision of public art as a means of enhancing the quality of the development. Although the policy does not make public art a mandatory requirement, other recent developments within the Science Park include public art provision (eg: Plots1-21). The policy states this can be on site or through a financial contribution. No public art strategy has been put forward by the applicant however, it is considered that appropriate public art provision can be secured by condition.
50. Subject to conditions, the proposed development is considered to comply with the NPPF and policies HQ/1 and HQ/2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

Historic Environment

51. The statutory considerations as set out in section 66(1) and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, are matters to which the determining authority must give great weight to when considering schemes which have the potential to impact on heritage assets. This is supported by policies HQ/1 and NH/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan which seek to conserve or enhance heritage assets, including their setting. There are no designated or non-designated heritage assets within close proximity to the site and the Conservation Officer has raised no objection on heritage grounds. The proposal will therefore, not impact upon the historic environment.

Landscaping/Trees

52. Policy HQ/1 requires the provision of high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate with its surroundings. The proposal includes a scheme of hard and soft landscaping to the front of the site. Concerns were initially raised with regard to the level of hard surfacing to the front of the property and in response the applicant has increased the amount of soft landscaping. The landscape officer has queried whether the curved form of the landscaping layout is contextually appropriate with the clean lines and angular appearance of the building. It is considered this matter can be addressed through a suitable landscaping condition.
53. The hard surfaced car parking is proposed as a hit and miss surface which will allow for seeding of the gaps between the paving units. The landscape officer does not consider the surface is consistent with local characteristics of the Science Park and is akin to more rural locations or settings such as country parks. The seeding is proposed to contain a high proportion of chewing fescue which salt, drought and shade tolerant and has low nutrient requirements. The use of such a surface has the added benefit of providing natural drainage as well as greening of the car park.
54. The draft NECAAP includes provision for a green corridor along the First Public Drain through the Science Park. It is not currently clear what the extent of this corridor will be, although there is an existing footpath on the southern side. This is not considered to carry any weight in the determination of the application however, the proposed modular laying technique for the car park surface would aid future transition if part of the land were to be included within this corridor or the demand for parking further reduces due to modal shift.
55. No objections are raised to the proposed parking surface however, details of hard surface materials proposed within the development can be secured by condition.
56. The site includes a small number of trees and hedges, all of which will be retained and none of which are subject to statutory protection. The arboricultural impact assessment recommends some minor works during the course of construction to ensure the existing vegetation is suitably managed and protected. This will be secured through an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan by condition.
57. The proposed landscaping scheme, including retained trees, complies with policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Biodiversity

58. National planning policies seek to ensure that biodiversity is conserved and enhanced. At a local level, planning policy NH/4 requires new development to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. The site does sit within the Impact Risk Zone of a nearby statutory protected site; however it does not meet the criteria that would require a consultation with Natural England. There are no non-statutory protected sites in the vicinity that are likely to be impacted by the application.
59. An ecology report has been submitted by the applicant in support of the application. The report found there was no evidence of bats or water vole within the application site. The report has undertaken a biodiversity loss calculation using the DEFRA Metric 2.0. The calculation has found a very low biodiversity value on site and post development calculations show a 130% increase in biodiversity. Although this is a significant increase in percentage terms, it is more a reflection of the lack of biodiversity on site presently. Nevertheless, it complies within Local Plan policy and as such conditions are proposed regarding the removal of vegetation to ensure the protection of breeding birds and the submission of a biodiversity enhancement scheme.
60. The proposed biodiversity enhancement complies with the NPPF and policy NH/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

61. A flood risk assessment and sustainable drainage strategy has been submitted in support of the application. The site is located within flood zone 1 and is a “less vulnerable” use. The development therefore meets national flood risk guidance with regard to being an appropriate location for the nature of the development. Policies CC/7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the Local Plan require new development to protect water quality through sustainable drainage systems and ensure that it will not increase flood risk elsewhere.
62. Sustainable drainage elements such as a green roof, planted rills and raingardens, permeable paving and infiltration trenches/blankets, will provide the required degree of water storage. Surface water generated from the development will discharge via infiltration for the majority of storm events, with overflow into the First Public Drain during severe storm events. Discharge to the First Public Drain will be controlled below the equivalent green-field run-off rates which is a 94% betterment from the existing brownfield rate.
63. The LLFA raised an initial concern regarding the impact of the proposed basement upon potential groundwater levels which are as shallow as 2m below ground level. In response to this concern the applicant produced a technical note which demonstrates this would increase by a maximum of 0.1 metres within the site. The LLFA are satisfied with this estimate subject to more comprehensive modelling which can be secured by condition.

64. With regard to foul drainage, Anglian Water note that the development is in the catchment of Cambridge WRC which currently does not have capacity to treat flows from the development. However, in the event permission is granted and the developer submits their formal application to connect to public sewers, Anglian Water will plan accordingly to accommodate the flows from this development.
65. The proposed surface water drainage strategy complies with the NPPF and policies CC7, CC/8 and CC/9 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Transport and Highways

66. Policy TI/2 of the Local Plan requires new development to reduce the need to travel particularly by car and promote sustainable forms of transport. The policy requires new development to demonstrate that it will mitigate the likely impacts (including cumulative impacts) particularly in areas where there are significant transport implications and that opportunities for sustainable travel are maximised. North East Cambridge is one such location where there are significant issues with regard to the capacity of the local highway network in the AM and PM peaks. Policy TI/3 sets out that on site car parking should be design-led and based on indicative ratios set out in Figure 11 of the Local Plan. Cycle parking requirements are applied as minimum standards.

North East Cambridge Transport Position Statement

67. A Transport Position Statement (TPS) has been issued by the County Council with regard to development in North East Cambridge. The County's approach is informed by the transport evidence base for the emerging NECAAP, including the A10 Study, which establishes that Milton Road is already at capacity. The studies recommend the application of a vehicle trip budget in preference to providing additional highway capacity to accommodate new growth. The trip budget works by calculating the existing peak trips generated within the area and apportioning these to the individual sites.
68. The purpose of the TPS is to ensure that development proposals within north east Cambridge that come ahead of the NECAAP submission, do not prejudice or frustrate the delivery of the strategic transport solution or wider development aspirations of the NECAAP area. Fundamentally, the Highways Authority will not consider future development proposals to be acceptable unless they (i) present proposals as part of a clear area-wide transport strategy, (ii) address cumulative impacts, and (iii) accord with the following key transport principles;
- Future growth will need to be delivered in a way that does not add additional car trips to the network
 - Applications within the area must seek to reduce or at worst equal current peak hour vehicle trip generation and should include measures to further reduce this over time.
 - Applications in the area must have a significantly reduced parking allocation / ratio for employment and housing
 - Developers for an area should submit a NEC or sub area-wide Transport Strategy that demonstrates how their individual application fits into the wider

masterplan for the sub area or NEC area as a whole (including reductions in overall parking provision as necessary).

- Each proposal within the AAP area should consider the impacts of cumulative development and provide effective mitigation. Development within the NEC area is required to make financial contributions towards strategic infrastructure.
- Proposed development must not lead to unacceptable air quality.
- Developments should indicate how they will engage with and support the promotion of walking and cycling to and from key nodes – and within the area
- Proposals will be expected to provide for future “area wide” travel planning initiatives as part of the AAP which would seek to ensure a coordinated approach to travel planning across the whole of the site, rather than rely solely on site specific travel plans.

69. The proposal meets with the general principles of the transport position statement and no objection has been raised by the Highway Authority in this regard. These matters are considered in more detail below.

Science Park – Car Parking Management Strategy

70. A car parking management strategy is in place for the Cambridge Science Park which proposes to reduce the number of car parking spaces across the Science Park. This strategy was established through a freestanding legal agreement under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) between Trinity College, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. The strategy was put in place as a result of proposals to develop plots 1-21 (S/2436/17/FL and 17/1193/FUL) and plot 24 (The Hub) (S/4629/18/FL). The level of car parking spaces within the Science Park prior to these applications being granted was 6,977. These applications add further car parking spaces within the Science Park, increasing the total level of parking to 7,498 spaces.

71. The car parking management strategy seeks to reduce the level of car parking back to 6,977 spaces within the Science Park over a 10 year period to 2030. Trinity College currently has control of around 33% of car parking spaces (2,500) within the Science Park. The college have committed to reducing car parking spaces within its control when leases are due to expire. The strategy also acts as a cap on car parking for development proposals coming forward, including this application which does not propose to increase on site car parking.

Trip Generation

72. The applicant has submitted a transport assessment (TA) in support of the application which has been assessed by the County Highways Transport Assessment Team in the context of the above transport principles for north east Cambridge. The Highways transport assessment team initially raised a holding objection to clarify further information regarding the proposal, particularly in relation to the likelihood of increased vehicle trips in the peak periods arising from the proposed development. The forecast vehicle trip generation expects there to be a negligible increase in vehicle movements (11) in the AM and PM peaks and

therefore, relies on a significant modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. The number of vehicle trips arising from the development would form part of the Science Park's overall trip budget.

73. The baseline conditions on characteristics of travel patterns by employees within the Science Park have been informed by Travel Plan Plus (TP+). This is an area wide travel plan initiative that covers staff and the Science Park, Cambridge Business Park and the Regional College. A summary of staff travel results are set out below in table 1. Also included in the table is the predicted mode share from the proposed development.

Table 1: Travel to Work Mode Share

Mode of Travel	% of staff (survey of existing)	% of staff (predicted from development)
Drive Alone	52%	11%
Car share (drive)	4%	10%
Car share (non-driver)	4%	10%
Cycle	25%	30%
Walk	6%	7%
Motorbike	1%	1%
Train	4%	8%
Conventional Bus	1%	6%
Guided Bus	3%	8%
Staff Shuttle Bus	0%	9%
TOTAL	100%	100%

74. The provision of on site parking spaces (36) remains unchanged as a result of the proposed development and results in a car parking ratio of 1:175m². This ratio aligns with targets set out in the transport evidence base for the emerging AAP. The TA predicts 200 trips in the AM peak and 194 trips in the PM peak compared to 46 in the AM peak and 45 in the PM peak from the existing building. The TA identifies the 36 car parking spaces (18%) would be split between "drive alone" and "car share". Given the restricted level of on site parking, residual travel demand is redistributed to other modes. The predicted modal split assumes a significant uplift in use of sustainable transport, car sharing and a staff shuttle bus. Using data from TP+ surveys of where people live who work in the Science Park, a number of employees (40%) will directly benefit from the future CAM network, Greenway cycle routes and Chisolm Trail. These employees have the potential to switch from car driving to non-car travel. The applicant has also identified that there are limited opportunities for on street parking within 800m of the site which is restricted to streets to the south and west of the application site where there are currently no parking restrictions. Given the significant modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport required to support the proposal the Highway Authority have recommended the following mitigation measures;

- Works to widen the footway to 3m on the inside of the science park perimeter road between the cycle path crossing south of the Science Park roundabout and the junction of the Science Park perimeter road with the

access into the side road leading to 127–136 Science Park. That these works include improving the crossing over the perimeter road south of the access roundabout. Works to be undertaken by the applicant, with the S278 to be agreed prior to occupation

- £165,000 for strategic transport infrastructure
- £5,000 towards parking restrictions in surrounding streets
- Provision of a Travel Plan to include membership of TP+

75. The Highway Authority have indicated the footway widening could be conditioned however, in the absence of a plan which accurately defines the scope and location of this work, it is considered more appropriate to secure a scheme of highways works as a planning obligation through a s106 agreement.

76. The site is accessed off a private road, accordingly the highways officer has no objection subject to a condition regarding provision of a traffic management plan.

77. Cycle parking provision includes 213 cycle parking spaces (1 space per 30m²) which meets Local Plan requirements. This provision is made up of 10 cargo bikes spaces, 23 sheffield stand spaces, 4 lock and dock stations, with the remainder as double stackers. The Council's landscape team have requested provision in accordance with the emerging NECAAP however, this does not carry any weight in the determination of the application. Nevertheless an appropriate mix of cycle parking is considered to be provided which is either within the main building or adjacent outbuilding on the western side of the site. Provision is also made for showers, lockers and changing facilities within the basement.

78. Subject to securing the transport mitigation measures by condition and planning obligations as set out above, the proposed development is considered to comply with policies TI/2 and TI/3 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Sustainable Construction/Carbon Reduction

79. The NPPF notes that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future and great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability (paragraph 131). Policy CC/1 requires new development to embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation into the development. Policy CC/3 requires new major developments to reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 10% through the use of on site renewable energy. Policy CC/4 requires proposals for non-residential development to achieve a minimum water efficiency standard of 2 BREEAM credits for water use. The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD provides further guidance on implementation of relevant Local Plan policies regarding sustainable design.

80. The structure of the building is proposed to be constructed with Cross Laminated Timber (CLT). This is a highly sustainable low embodied carbon solution. It is also the only structural frame solution that provides carbon sequestration – considered carbon negative. It is proposed that the building will be built to BREEAM Excellent standard and is targeting Gold certification under the WELL Building (health and wellbeing) standard.

81. The CLT structure allows for inherent air tightness ideal for a fabric first approach to reduce operational energy consumption. The proposal includes passive design measures such as enhanced fabric thermal performance, external secondary skin shading, maximising natural light and solar shading via internal blinds. Active design measures to reduce energy consumption include low energy LED lighting, natural ventilation with heat recovery and energy metering. In following the energy hierarchy, the proposal also includes provision for onsite renewables to which include air source heat pumps, solar PV panels and solar thermal panels. The combination of passive and active design measures and use of onsite renewable energy delivers a carbon reduction of 51% from the Part L Building Regulations baseline. This exceeds policy CC/3 requirements. The applicant has also carried out an overheating risk assessment which demonstrates that the building's overheating model of passive design measures (in line with the cooling hierarchy) and hybrid natural ventilation system is designed to withstand higher temperatures and adapt to climate change. In addition, comfort cooling is also proposed through air source heat pumps.

82. A Life Cycle Assessment has been undertaken to assess the environmental impact of the proposal, looking at energy requirements and emissions that result from the development from cradle-to-grave, ensuring the embodied carbon that will result from this development is taken into account. Whilst no baseline targets for embodied carbon are set out in the Local Plan, this demonstrates the applicant's holistic approach to delivering a sustainable building.

83. In terms of water consumption, the water saving measures to be included within the development will achieve a minimum 25% improvement over baseline building water consumption. These include;

- Water efficient sanitaryware
- Soft landscaping and irrigation, including drought tolerant planting and use of planting beds as passive irrigation
- Water meters
- Leak detection

This will achieve 2 BREEAM credits as required by policy CC/4.

84. The Council's sustainability officer is in support of the applicant's approach to sustainable construction subject to conditions. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the NPPF and policies CC1, CC/3 and CC/4 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Land Contamination

85. Policy SC/11 of the Local Plan requires applicants to demonstrate there will be no adverse health impacts to surrounding occupiers or end users from ground contamination. The application is accompanied by a site investigation report. The Council's officer agrees with the report's recommendation that there is a very low risk of harm to human health from the land on the application site. As the site is not being developed for a sensitive end use, no contaminated land condition is required.

Air Quality

86. Policy SC/12 of the Local Plan is concerned with air quality impacts and explains that where development proposals would be subject to unacceptable air quality standards or would have an unacceptable impact on air quality standards they will be refused. The policy further identifies that Development will not be permitted where it would adversely affect air quality in an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Council has declared an Air Quality Management Area due to exceedances of the annual mean NO₂ and 24-hour mean PM₁₀ NAQO along the A14 between Bar Hill and Milton, to the north east of the application site.
87. An Air Quality Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application. This concludes that the air quality impacts from the proposed development with regard to road traffic are “not significant” and that no mitigation is required. The report recognises there is the potential for dust during the construction phase and that mitigation should be provided to minimise this impact. Subject to this mitigation, the impacts are deemed “not significant”.
88. The site also falls within the safeguarded area for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Works (CWWTW). The Council has produced a technical note on the interpretation of the “Odour Impact Assessment for the Cambridge Water Recycling Centre” which has been produced as part of the evidence base for the emerging NECAAP. The site falls outside the odour exposure contours identified within this report and therefore, it is not considered the development will be adversely affected by odour from the CWWTW.
89. In line with policy SC/12 in aiming to improve air quality, the proposed development states that electric vehicle charging points will be provided to serve every car parking space. The type of charging point is not identified however, it is considered a scheme for electric vehicle charging points can be submitted and agreed by condition.
90. The proposed development is not considered to give rise to any significant air quality impacts nor will it be adversely affected by the nearby WWTW. The proposal is therefore, in accordance with the NPPF and policy SC/12.

Other Matters

91. Conditions requested by Environmental Health regarding restrictions on construction hours and burning of waste are not considered to meet the conditions tests to make the development acceptable in planning terms. This is because there are no residents in close proximity to the site and burning of waste can be controlled through environmental protection legislation.
92. The proposed condition regarding submission of a BREEAM post construction certificate has been amended to reflect the fact that certain BREEAM credits cannot be documented before construction is completed. Accordingly, an application to the Building Research Establishment (BRE) for final certification cannot be made until final completion. Therefore, rather than “prior to first

occupation”, it is proposed that the submission of the post construction certificate no later than 6 months after first occupation. Such wording is advised through the Planning Inspectorate to Inspectors proposing such conditions and is therefore, considered reasonable.

Planning Obligations

93. The NPPF states that LPAs should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Policy TI/8 of the Local Plan states that planning permission for new developments will only be supported where there are suitable arrangements for the improvement or provision and phasing of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms.

94. The following matters are proposed to be secured through a Section 106 agreement;

- £165,000 towards strategic transport infrastructure
- £5,000 towards on street parking restrictions
- Scheme of highways works to provide footway/cycleway improvements

Planning balance and conclusion

95. Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The NPPF is a material consideration which must be taken into account where it is relevant to a planning application. This includes the presumption in favour of sustainable development found in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which requires approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

96. The NPPF lists the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. In terms of its economic role, the proposed development will deliver employment led growth within the Science Park which is identified as a location within South Cambridge to deliver appropriate employment proposals. In a social role the proposal will achieve a well designed building appropriate to its context in a modern business park. In an environmental role the proposal makes effective use of previously developed land with a building which embraces sustainable construction through the use of sustainable natural resources (timber) whilst also minimising energy consumption through passive design and use of renewable energy, thus demonstrating a building which is adaptable and resilient to climate change. The proposed development will also provide a net gain in biodiversity and not cause harm to other aspects of the environment such as air, water or soil.

97. The proposed development is therefore, considered to meet the objectives of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and it is recommended to grant planning permission.

Recommendation

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to;

1. The prior completion of a Section 106 Agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 with delegated authority to officers to negotiate, secure and complete such an Agreement on the terms set out within section 94 this report and any others considered appropriate and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; and
2. The planning conditions specified in this report and detailed in Appendix 1 with authority delegated to officers to include any minor drafting changes thereto; and
3. The relevant informatives as set out in Appendix 1 to be included at the discretion of officers.

Background Papers

North East Cambridge – Interim Transport Approach (Report of Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development to JDCC 17 March 2021)

Appendices

Appendix A: Conditions and Informatives

Report Author:

Name – Phil McIntosh, Interim Management Support